

P.S. Address from British Unitarian Minister  
case of Unitarian persecution

Leicester, Massachusetts, Decr. 30. 1844.

My dear Sir,

Your note of 29<sup>th</sup> October was duly received, and afforded me much pleasure. It would give me pleasure to serve you in any way, and I am glad that you sent to me at this time. But it is not at all probable that I shall be called to do anything about the little commission you gave me. The little packets of the hair of Rammohun Roy, I cannot doubt, will find ready purchasers. Some there are, I know, and doubtless many whom I do not know, who would rejoice to possess <sup>one of these</sup> ~~xxx~~ undoubted relics of a most extraordinary man. I was in Boston last week, and visited the Antislavery Fair or Bazaar. [We have nothing, in this country, answering to your English (and the Continental) Fairs - hence the word has come to be used by us as a name for these charitable Bazaars, and does not convey to our mind, of course, the association it does to yours.] I was much pleased with the very neat manner in which the packets of hair were done up. By a copy of the "Christian World", which I send you herewith, you will ~~also see~~ see that I called the attention of its readers to your donation. I was very happy to see letters & extracts of letters, from Bristol, to M<sup>rs</sup>. Chapman, published in the National Antislavery Standard - among them, one from your daughter, and one from Miss Carpenter. <sup>I regret some typographical errors in the latter.</sup> You will probably see this paper. I hope <sup>none of the writers</sup> ~~you~~ will ~~not~~ feel unpleasantly, that their communications were printed. Letters of this kind have long been so treated in the Antislavery Cause; and these



occasional voices of sympathy & encouragement from  
across the ocean have been most cheering, and of the  
greatest value to the cause. This, I hope, will induce  
your daughter, & Miss C., and others, to look leniently upon  
the publication of their letters.

The Fair opened on Tuesday Dec. 24. at Amory Hall,  
a spacious & handsome apartment on the principal street  
of the city. It was well stocked with beautiful and  
valuable articles, among which the Contributions from England,  
Scotland, & Ireland were, as they always have been, conspicuous.  
Every visiter ~~inquires~~ makes early inquiry for the tables  
where these contributions are to be found. I saw very  
many pretty & beautiful things from Bristol, but could not  
find all that ~~for~~ came from there; probably some had been  
disposed of before I arrived. Miss Carpenter's sketches of  
Rhine Scenery were very beautiful & very much admired.  
The one of Rolandseck & Nonnensworth was ~~very~~ beautiful  
indeed, and I saw it (with some sorrow, I must confess) borne  
away by a lady in her portfolio, who paid for it \$5.  
The water color drawings of Mess. Fripp (is this the name?)  
were very spirited and beautiful. I noticed the specimens  
of Tinting by reflection sent by your daughter - something  
quite new to us, and curious. Numerous ladies' bags, &c.  
I saw, marked with the names of Bristol Contributors. We  
are indeed deeply your debtors for your kind interest in  
the labors of the Antislavery band, and for your most  
generous contributions to it. You will hear more, I doubt  
not, from Mr. Chapman - at least, will see a more



full & particular account than I can give, ~~in the~~ which  
will unquestionably be published in the Liberator, and  
Standard.

Will you have the kindness to say to Miss Carpenter  
and to Rev. Mr. James that I received their letter, with  
some very acceptable pamphlets from each, in the box which  
contained the aforesaid Bristol Contributions. I shall not be  
long in replying to them, I trust. May I also trouble you, Sir,  
to say to Mr. Armstrong that I received his letter of Dec. 2<sup>d</sup>. by  
the last Mail Steamship, and that I forwarded to him certain  
pamphlets by the same hand which took my last letters to him.  
He had not received them, he says - I hope they will have come to  
hand <sup>before</sup> ~~at~~ this time.

Mr. & Mrs. Jewell of Ynis Penllwch, of whom  
you speak, are friends of ours, whose acquaintance  
we made during a very short stay in South Wales. They treated us  
with great kindness & hospitality. The Managers of the Antislavery  
Fair would be most happy to receive any contributions from Mr. L.  
and her sister, as you suggest.

I do not wonder that you and others feel that the British  
Unitarian Ministers who sent us the Antislavery address have not  
been "very civilly treated". This however must be entirely laid at the  
door of the Committee who were charged with the execution of our purpose  
to send a reply. ~~As~~ Our Ministers generally, I know, wished to have  
the reply sent promptly. One fact should be known, which may  
lighten a very little the burden of blame which rests on the Committee's  
shoulders, viz. that there never was ~~a very~~ a real satisfaction with  
the reply reported by the Committee & which, for want of a better, was  
(after some amendments) voted to be sent; and, that this satisfaction  
grew less and less, and many who had sent in their names were  
afterwards desirous that the Committee should take some steps to  
provide a more suitable reply. Their fault, in the first



instance, lay in suspending all operations. They should either have forwarded the reply in their possession promptly, or with no delay have called those, whom they represented, together again for farther instructions. They have made the whole matter worse by their most extraordinary letter accompanying the Reply. I never felt more indignant in my life, I think, than when I read it, in Boston, a week ago to-day. Committee as they were, agents of others, they do not hesitate to say that they had determined it was "unnecessary" to ~~proceed~~ discharge the office which had been <sup>entrusted to</sup> ~~put upon~~ them, and which they had accepted. I am not willing to believe that Mr. Stetson of Medford (one of the Committee) participated in these proceedings much less in the composition of that letter. Of Mr. Thompson of Salem, (another of the Comtee.) I cannot say so much; for he has deliberately justified and approved the whole course of the Committee in two several conversations with me. — While in Boston, I prepared a short notice of this letter, and sent it to the "Christian World", in hope it would appear last Saturday — but it will not, till next Saturday Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>, too late for me to send a copy <sup>to Mr. Armstrong</sup> before the 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Steamship. I shall endeavour to do so then.

I know well your deep interest in Unitarian Christianity, and I will therefore tax your patience with ~~related to you~~ a brief relation of a recent case of Unitarian persecution ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> the good city of Boston. There is an Association of the Boston Unitarian Churches, as you doubtless know, called the Fraternity of Churches, for the purpose of sustaining the Ministry at Large. They sustain 3 ministers, and have 2 large & commodious brick Chapels in the City. One of their ministers is — or rather was — Rev. John F. Sargent. Some time since, in the course of his regular pulpit services, he exchanged pulpit with Rev. Theodore Parker

Ms. B. 1. 6 v. 2, p. 15

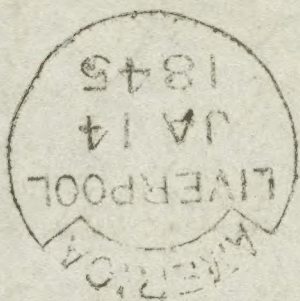


of West Roxbury - a gentleman whose pretty free exercise of the  
right of inquiry & private judgment & free speech has brought upon  
himself no small condemnation from some quarters, and quite  
as much admiration in others. - This exchange of pulpits, for a  
Sunday, or part of a Sunday, is much more common with us, I  
suspect, than with you. - For this exchange Mr. Sargent was reprimanded  
at the time, by some of the Officers of the Fraternity. Recently  
he did the thing again - perhaps 6 weeks since. Immediately  
after, he received a letter of rebuke & censure ~~for~~ signed (as I  
understand on good authority) by two lay gentlemen, in behalf  
of the Executive Committee of the Fraternity. - This letter has not  
been published, and Mr. Sargent informed me that Rev. Mr. Lotthrop,  
the Secretary of the Fraternity was not willing to consent to its publication,  
- but we shall have it, probably. - Mr. Sargent  
felt that this was a direct & unmistakeable attempt  
to control his conscience and action, where, especially  
in a Unitarian Association, he ought to be free. He  
felt it to be, as very many of us have thought it, an act of petty  
ecclesiastical tyranny. He sent to the Committee his resignation of  
his office as Minister at Large - and it was forthwith accepted.  
- He is about printing a sermon, which he wrote & preached in  
consequence of this affair. He was to preach his Farewell sermon  
to his Society yesterday.

Mr. Sargent, I should have said, is  
<sup>very</sup> far from sympathizing in Mr. Parker's views of Christianity as  
a revelation, and of Christ as <sup>divinely</sup> authorized and specially selected  
messenger of God. I have reason to believe that none of our  
ministers are more free from the suspicion of this than Mr. Sargent.  
He however utterly abominates the spirit of proscription with which  
Mr. Parker has been treated, and has been led in consequence  
to manifest a sympathy in his position, which he does not feel in  
his belief - and very many others are in the same situation.

Please offer my sincere regards to Miss Estlin, and to all my  
Bristol friends. My brother is very well - I saw him last week.  
Believe me, with sincere respect, Yours, Sam<sup>l</sup> May.





Per Steamship, }  
January 1. }

J. B. Estlin Esq.

Bristol.

[England.]